

8-31-1863

Thomas L. Evans letter to his sister from Camp near Carleton Louisiana, August 31, 1863

Thomas L. Evans

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Camp near Carleton Lo. Aug. 31st

Dear Sister,

I scarcely know where to begin ^{to} write unless it is praising the nice weather we have which ^{is} nice as ever I saw pleasant with a pleasant breeze through the day and quite cool of nights so the mosquitoes do not bother us. # The health of the Co. is excellent. Everything indicates that we will have to move into active service in a few days as we are preparing ourselves for it by getting a good supply of clothing blankets &c. which we will need in a campaign without tents. I have been unusually busy since we came here. Friday we had inspection Saturday a grand review and yesterday I spent the day in making out muster rolls as to day is muster day. I have not had time to visit the City yet but a number of the boys have been down & think very much of the place.

It is something new for us get to a city where business is carried on in the old fashioned peaceful way. Reviews are generally stiled grand humbugs by soldiers but the one we had last Saturday was an exception and receives universal praise from men & officers. I wish I could picture it to your imagination so you could see it.

as I saw, it. We are camped on a broad green plain interspersed with occasional shade tree. Just in the rear of our camp there is a part of the plain in which no troops are camp. Here our corps was collected together for review. The infantry in four columns parallel with each other and about ten rods apart. Each column formed a separate division about a half mile long and numbering from three to five thousand men in their brightest uniform & with guns & bayonets gleaming bright.

At the rear of the 24th division of Infantry was the artillery 50 or 60 pieces drawn up in line and in rear of that two or three thousand cavalry. We are in the 24th Division & I which threw us in the rear column of infantry a good position to see all that was going on. First was the plain in front of us and extending far to our right & left covered with troops each Reg. in best style With stars & stripes & Reg. Banner, floating. The plain extending beyond this covered with tents and still in the background the town of Carleton with its magnificent buildings peeping out from among the thick shade trees which form a kind of ^{grove} village around every southern village or residence and along the river a mile distant the Steamboats are moving quietly along with their flags afloat on the air & the smoke from their stacks wreathing

up & forming light fantastic clouds in the
pure ^{atmosphere} atmosphere

About 10 o'clock all is ready for review as is
announced by the firing of cannon on our
left. Then the bands begin to play and
the reviewing officer (Gen Banks) with other Generals
his aides and escorts splendidly mounted and
equiped rides along up the front & down
the rear of each column. This takes about an
hour. The Gen. then placed himself & in a convenient
position and the troops march past him to
their camps, where we arrived just in time
for dinner. It is the first time I ever saw
the troops come in from review in a good humor.
I never saw such a body of troops all
in as good condition before.

I rather like the appearance of Gen. Banks he
has an intelligent looking head & a keen eye.

But enough of Reviews & Generals. I hope
we will not need them much longer
except as ornament. I expect there will
be some more hard battles yet but
I am still strong in the faith that a
few months will end this war with a
restoration of the old union. You know
though that it is my nature to live in
hope. For instance I hope I will get a
letter from home again after while if it has

been a month since my last one was written. But I have got so far from home the most of the news I get from home will likely be about a month old. I hope therefore to get the more of them. You cannot expect late news from me now though when I possibly can I will write every week. Write soon as you get this & tell me all the news. I am not right well but am able to do all the duties that fall to me to do and if I was at home I would not quit work.

I feel right well some days and others a little unwell I suppose it is the season of the year and the change of climate. I think when we once get on a march I will come out all right. I am not uneasy at all and would have said nothing about it but is my rule when I write to tell you what I know you all want to know. That is just how I am.

I begin to want a little rest rest from the army that I might spend a few weeks in society. This is the first time I have ever felt a bit restless & if we would get on the move again I think I would not show my love to all

Your affectionate Brother

Thomas

John. The mail goes this evening & I must finish by stating that I am perfectly well again. Robust as ever. Yesterday I was at town & had a fine stroll over the City & I think it a fine place but saw nothing in particular worthy of note. Tomorrow we are to have another grand review by Gen. Grant. I don't crave the job of going on review but thank fortune Grant is with us again. Weather pleasant as ever.

Thomas

Camp near Carleton La. Aug. 31st, '63.

Dear Sister:

I scarcely know where to begin to write unless it is praising the nice weather we have which is nice as ever I saw pleasant with a pleasant breeze through the day and quite cool of nights so the mosquitos do not bother us. The health of the Co. is excellent. Everything indicates that we will have to move into active service in a few days as we are preparing ourselves for it by getting a good supply of clothing, blankets, etc. which we will need in a campaign without tents. I have been unusually busy since we came here. Friday we had inspection, Saturday, a grand review and yesterday I spent the day in making out muster rolls as to-day is muster day. I have not had time to visit the city yet but a number of the boys have been down and think very much of the place. It is something new for us to get to a city where business is carried on in the old fashioned peaceful way. Reviews are generally stiled grand humbus by soldiers but the one we had last Saturday was an exception and receives universal praise from men and officers. I wish I could picture it to your imagination so you could see it as I saw it. We are camped on a broad green plain intersperced with an occasional shade tree; just in the rear of our camp there is a part of the plain on which no troops are camp. Here our corps was collected together for review. The infantry in our columes parallel with each other and about ten rods apart. Each colume formed a separate division about a half mile long and numbering from three to five thousand men in their brightest uniform with guns and bayonets gleaming bright.

In the rear of the 4th division of Infantry was the artillery 50 or 60 pieces drawn up in line and in rear of that, two or three thousand cavalry. We are in the 4th Division which threw us in the rear colume of infantry - a good position to see all that was going on. First was the plain in front of us and extending far to our right and left covered with troops, each Reg.

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I begin to want a little rest from the army that I might spend a few weeks in society. This is the first time I have ever felt a bit restless and if we would get on the move again, I think I would not now. My love to all,

Your affectionate brother,

Thomas.

Sept. 3rd. The mail goes this evening and I must finish by stating that I am perfectly well again, robust as ever. Yesterday I was at town and had a fine stroll over the city and think it a fine place but saw nothing in particular worthy of note. To-morrow we are to have another grand review by Gen. Grant. I don't crave the job of going on ~~service~~ review but thank fortune Grant is with us again. Weather pleasant as ever.

Thomas.